



Staying Nimble:

How the State Bar of Nevada Adapted to Serve Members in 2020

BY NEVADA LAWYER STAFF

In 2020, many businesses – law practices included – found themselves suddenly adapting to a rapidly changing workplace. As members’ needs quickly pivoted, so did the State Bar of Nevada’s, as it shifted its plans for the year to prioritize helping its members during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Connecting the Community Online

One of the first tangible ways the pandemic affected the State Bar of Nevada was the sudden cancellation of the Family Law Conference in March 2020, while the conference was in progress! Informed that the venue in Bishop, California, would no longer be able to accommodate groups of its size due to newly enacted restrictions by the state of California, the state bar began to move its events to virtual venues. As further safety restrictions closed offices, courthouses and legal services, it became clear that state bar members needed to network in order to share ideas and rapidly changing information now more than ever – but they needed to do so safely, in a virtual setting.

To meet this need, the state bar offered a series of free, virtual town

hall events through its sections, so law practitioners in a variety of key areas could get the latest news and practice tips from others in similar situations. Working closely with our sections, the state bar hosted town halls for probate and trust, real property, bankruptcy, labor and employment, and gaming law. The state bar also offered free CLEs in virtual mediation and advising clients on how to obtain PPP funding and tax relief under the CARES Act. In addition, to further support our members, the state bar offered an entire week of CLE and other programs focused on lawyer well-being, including weekly virtual stress and anxiety relief meetings. In total, the bar hosted more than 15 events and provided free CLE credits to hundreds of event attendees.

The state bar also rolled out new and expanded communications to keep members informed about rapidly changing information including

courthouse closures, court orders, legal resources, best practices and more. The state bar created a special pandemic edition of its eNewsletter, which shared eight issues worth of COVID-19-related news curated specifically for Nevada’s legal community. Altogether, the state bar issued more than 80 news stories via its website and social media, and it developed a pandemic resources section of its website to provide a one-stop clearinghouse of all statewide legal news related to COVID-19.

Tangible, Meaningful Support

In addition, the state bar reached out to its business partners, who stepped up and provided multiple free or discounted services to Nevada attorneys throughout the year. These included:

- Complementary telehealth benefits from Insurance Marketplace;

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- Free CLE and legal research training from Fastcase;
- A \$100 credit for attorney electronic payment services from LawPay;
- Waived setup fees for lawyers using virtual receptionist services from Front Office Staff;
- Discounted startup services for members using Identillect for email and internet security;
- Waived application fees for sole practitioners joining the state bar’s Lawyer Referral Service to find new clients; and much more.

Remote Bar Exam and Annual Meeting

One of the most significant adaptations made by the state bar in 2020 was moving the summer Nevada Bar Exam to a virtual environment. The bar’s Admissions team began working with service providers in March 2020 to explore options for providing a virtual exam; although the alterations caused some delays, the Nevada Bar Exam took place in August 2020 online, as an open-book, timed exam. For more information on the summer 2020 bar exam, see the article on page 31 of the November 2020 issue of *Nevada Lawyer*.

The state bar also pivoted its plans for its Annual Meeting, cancelling the scheduled in-person event in New Orleans in favor of a safer and more accessible virtual event that took place via Zoom on June 24, 2020. During that event, members of the Board of Governors offered presentations on state bar programs, finances and more. Presenters offered information on the Discipline Task Force, lawyer well-being, Nevada Bar Exam, volunteer

opportunities and the state bar’s goals for 2021.

The New Normal

Once it became clear that the changes spurred by the pandemic were not likely to revert anytime soon, the state bar shifted its focus and began finding ways to support members as they, too, settled into the “new normal” of working from home, holding most meetings virtually, transitioning away from physical resources to digital ones and more.

The state bar launched its Remote Work Blog in May 2020. It provides more than a dozen articles written by practicing Nevada attorneys and judges offering real hands-on tricks and tips designed to help lawyers succeed while working

remotely. Find it at <https://www.nvbar.org/blog/>. “Ask a Nerd” technology tips were also added to the weekly eNewsletter to support lawyers working remotely.

In addition, the state bar has been reviewing and altering its policies and procedures to make better use of digital resources whenever possible, such as by transitioning its

disciplinary department to use paperless documents and holding virtual disciplinary hearings.

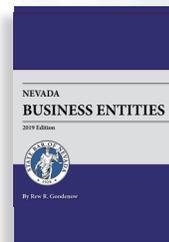
For more information on the State Bar of Nevada’s strategic plan for 2021 and beyond, please visit www.nvbar.org > About Us > Board of Governors. The board welcomes input from members regarding other ways the bar can support lawyers in Nevada – bar members are welcome to send ideas and suggestions to the Board of Governors representatives. Their contact information is also available at www.nvbar.org.

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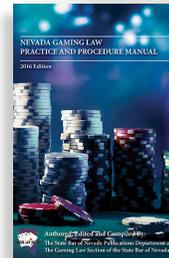
BOOKS FROM THE BAR



The State Bar of Nevada has several reference publications available to meet the needs of Nevada attorneys, from comprehensive guides to compilations of templates in a variety of practice areas.



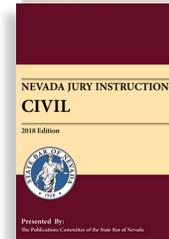
Nevada Business Entities - 2019 EDITION



Nevada Gaming Law Practice and Procedure Manual



Contract Templates for Nevada Attorneys



Nevada Jury Instructions: Civil - 2018 EDITION

To see all of the current titles available, visit: www.nvbar.org > Publications > State Bar Publications